

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION
September 28, 2020

PRESENT: Chairman Mark Culver, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Commissioner Doug Sinuefield, Commissioner Ricky Herring, Commissioner Brandon Shoupe, County Attorney Pres Register and Chief Administrative Officer Peter Covert.

Chairman Culver welcomed everyone to the September 28th, 2020, Houston County Commission Meeting and called the 10:00 a.m. meeting to order. He declared a quorum as all commissioners were in attendance.

The invocation was given by Commissioner Harvey and Commissioner Herring led in the pledge of allegiance.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved on a motion by Commissioner Harvey and seconded by Commissioner Sinuefield. The motion passed unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND COMMISSIONER

Chairman Culver began by announcing that the next Commission meeting, to be held in two weeks, would be held on Tuesday, October 13th since that Monday, October 12th, the county will be observing the Columbus Day Holiday. The Administrative Meeting will be held the Thursday prior to that Tuesday.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

1. Presentation – American Legion Adopt-A-Mile – Lehman Irby

Commissioner Shoupe introduced Mr. Lehman Irby of the American Legion as he approached the podium. Mr. Irby began by thanking the Chairman and Commissioners for having him in attendance today. He introduced himself as the Commander of the American Legion Post 12 and stated that the American Legion is the oldest of the veteran's service organizations in the country and that they chartered in 1919 with the Dothan Post 12 chartering in 1926 and that they hosted the National Peanut Festival in 1940. Mr. Irby stated that the Post has been active in the community and wants to continue to do so by helping to clean up Houston County by adopting-a-mile. Their mile is south of Hwy. 84 on Brannon Stand Road from mile marker 17 to mile marker 18. He reported that they did this for a number of reasons with one being that the

American Legion not only serves Veterans, but they serve their community as well. He thanked Commissioner Shoupe for bringing this cause to their attention and thanked the Commission as well. Chairman Culver thanked Mr. Irby and stated that Brannon Stand is a very busy road with about 10,000 cars a day traveling through. He mentioned that it is a state road and he would have loved for them to pick a county road, but they are committing to their community and that is what is important. Chairman Culver thanked the American Legion for all they do for the Community.

2. Proclamation – “Homeless Connect Month” – David Jamison and Kody Kirchoff

Commissioner Sinuefield made a motion to approve the proclamation and Commissioner Shoupe seconded. The motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Shoupe read the proclamation and presented it to Mr. Jamison. Chairman Culver thanked Mr. Jamison for bringing this cause to the attention of the Commission and for all he does in the community. He asked Mr. Jamison for comments. Mr. Jamison began by stating how grateful they are for the citizens of Houston County and how they have stepped up over the years to provide assistance for the homeless in the community in many different ways. He stated that, obviously, COVID-19 has changed a lot around this endeavor and they hope to account for this by naming a month rather than a date for the “Homeless Connect”. Mr. Jamison continued by stating that Houston County is a very caring county and the people have always amazed them by filling the trailer of goods and services for the homeless in the community. He said that they hoped that one day there will not be a homeless population as great as it is today and they are working towards that goal. Mr. Jamison ended by thanking the Commission for recognizing this event and he also thanked the citizens of Houston County for all they do to help the homeless. Chairman Culver thanked Mr. Jamison for being here today.

3. Proclamation – “Family Day – A Day to Eat Dinner With Your Children” – Roxane Fuentes, Prevention Project Community Coordinator and Anthony Martin, Youth Member

Commissioner Shoupe made a motion to approve the proclamation and Commissioner Herring seconded. The motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Herring read the proclamation and presented it to Ms. Fuentes. Chairman Culver thanked Ms. Fuentes and Mr. Martin for being in attendance today and commented that this is a proclamation that is presented each year and it is an important one and asked for comments. Mr. Martin thanked the Commission and began by stating that during this day and time there is access to many different technologies and some have become necessities. He stated that it is very important to spend time with your family and the best way to do so is eat dinner together and put electronics away and interact with each other. Mr. Martin added that having conversations with your family is a great way to

earn trust and get to really know each other and be in your family's life. He commented that one of the most important reasons that family time is important is knowing that they may not always be around and don't think for a second that your kids will outlive you and this is why you should always spend as much time as possible with your family so you can avoid having regrets. Mr. Martin stated that one of his hero's is James Dean and he has a picture of him in his room. At the bottom of the picture, Mr. Martin said it reads "Dream as if you will live forever and live as if you will die today". He encouraged everyone to go home and sit at the table and stay off your phone and communicate with your family as they are important and for everyone to live as if you'll die today.

Chairman Culver thanked Mr. Martin for his comments and stated that one item that he left off under "Announcements" was he wanted to publically state and on behalf of the commission, that he wanted to send condolences to the Dothan Eagle family during their time of loss. He commented that we all need to value everyday and that tomorrow is not guaranteed and the family of the Dothan Eagle is having a hard time during the loss of one of their family/staff members. Thoughts and prayers go out to all of them.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Request to approve resolution for the vacating of a portion of Barton Road

Commissioner Sinuefield made a motion to deny the request for the vacating of a portion of Barton Road. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Commissioner Sinuefield began by stating that thoughts and prayers are with the Willoughby family during this time of loss of Barton Willoughby. He continued that there are many concerns as the public input on the vacating of a section of Barton Road is present. He stated that those that have been affected have contacted him with concern. This will continue to be a county maintained road at this point and there will still be a portion that would be county maintained if a portion was vacated. Commissioner Sinuefield stated that out of the concern of those that have attended the public hearing today and those that have contacted him it makes him feel that at this point that the portion of Barton Road not be vacated. Chairman Culver asked County Attorney Pres Register that if, in the near future, this is worked out between the abutting homeowners and all parties concerned, can this be brought back as a request to the Commission and is there a time frame involved. Mr. Register stated that, because this was petitioned by the abutting landowners, the law requires that this be brought before the commission within 100 days of the petition. He continued that if Mrs. Willoughby would like to withdraw her petition that it would alleviate any issues. Chairman Culver asked what if she doesn't withdraw the petition, when can it be brought back before the commission and Mr. Register replied that if this particular petition is

denied, and if changes were made, it could be brought back at a later date. Mr. Register stated that it could be brought back again. Chairman Culver replied that if this is denied today and Mrs. Willoughby and the land owners get together and come to an agreement, this can be brought back to the commission. Chairman Culver asked for the vote and the motion to deny the request passed unanimously. Chairman Culver added that he should have asked if anyone would like to make any comments and Mr. Virgil Jordan came forward and stated that he lives on Barton Road. He stated that if there can be something put together that there could be access to the highway that he doesn't think there would be any opposing to that. Chairman Culver commented that as a commission, they vote on vacating the road, not closing the road so if there can be something worked out amongst the homeowners in the future then it can be brought back and voted on.

2. Request to award ACCA Joint County Bids

Commissioner Shoupe made a motion to approve the awarding of the ACCA Joint County Bids and Commissioner Harvey seconded. Chairman Culver commented that this is primarily bids on materials and the heavy equipment bids will be later in the year. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Request to appoint Cal Whaley to the Wiregrass Area Food Bank

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the appointment of Cal Whaley to the Wiregrass Area Food Bank. Commissioner Herring seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

4. Request to approve emergency expenditure from the Capital Replacement Fund to replace HVAC unit and insulate attic space at the Veteran Affairs Building – Sean Curtis, Buildings Maintenance Manager

Commissioner Shoupe made a motion to approve the emergency expenditure and Commissioner Sinquefield seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Request to approve a Multi-Use Transportation Study Agreement

Commissioner Shoupe made a motion to approve the Multi-Use Transportation Study Agreement and Commissioner Herring seconded. Chairman Culver stated that this agreement is with Mr. Kim Meeker and he has reviewed the agreement and is acceptable to the terms as presented. Commissioner Shoupe commented that he believes that this is a great day for

Houston County and a great step in the right direction as it gives both young and old the opportunity to bike, walk, jog, or whatever they wish to do, all over the county without having to get on a highway or county road. Commissioner Shoupe stated that he is very excited about this coming to fruition. The motion passed unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS:

Chief Administrative Officer – No report

County Engineer – Engineer Kirkland was not in attendance. Chairman Culver reported for the R & B Dept. and that there are no new road closures or openings from last week but currently the following roads remain closed: Middleton, Day, S. Park, Gin, Gilmore, Gene Terry and two locations on Coot Adams

County Attorney – No report

Meeting adjourned